



COUNTY OF SAN BENITO
PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES

3224 Southside Road
Hollister, CA 95023
e-mail: sbcplan@planning.co.san-benito.ca.us

Phone: 831-637-5313
Fax: 831-637-5334

February 23, 2009

MAR 5 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director,
ATTN. San Francisco to San Jose,
California High-Speed Rail Authority,
925 L Street, Suite 1425, Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Comments regarding the Notice of Preparation for the San Francisco to San Jose, California High-Speed Rail

out of
area

Mr. Leavitt:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Notice of Preparation for the San Francisco to San Jose portion of the California high speed rail project. Staff would like to take this opportunity to direct your attention to the letter submitted to California High-Speed Rail Authority by our Board of Supervisors back in September, 2007; as comments described in that letter remain pertinent. The previously submitted letter was in response to the Draft Program DEIR/DEIS for the high speed rail project. In addition to the comments described in the attached letter, staff would also like to inform your agency of a large proposed residential project within our County and in the vicinity of the HST route.

#1

This proposed project, El Rancho San Benito, is located in the northern portion of San Benito County. This proposed project site appears to be bordered by the proposed HST route. Staff has provided a map depicting where the proposed route is to be located in relation to the proposed project site. Staff has also provided a project description of the El Rancho San Benito project, for which you may wish to review in order to fully consider the potential impact of an additional 6,800 homes and the additional population which may impact the proposed Gilroy station.

#2
Station
#1
land
use

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Preparation and for taking into consideration the HST possible affects on San Benito County.

Respectfully,

Art Henriques
Art Henriques

San Benito County Building and Planning Director

CO 1



COUNTY OF SAN BENITO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

481 FOURTH STREET, HOLLISTER, CALIFORNIA 95023

(831) 636-4000 • FAX (831) 636-4010

Don Marcus
District 1

Anthony Boteilho
District 2

Pat Loe
District 3

Reb Monaco
District 4

Jalme De La Cruz
District 5

September 25, 2007

California High-Speed Train
California High-Speed Rail Authority
Draft Program DEIR/DEIS Comments
925 L Street Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Out
of area

Subject: Comments regarding Draft Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train (HST)
Program DEIR/DEIS

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed California High-Speed Train project. Following are some of the concerns of the San Benito County Board of Supervisors regarding the DEIR/DEIS for the proposed project.

The proposed California High-Speed Train project would provide a reliable, high-speed train system between major metropolitan areas within the State, linking the Bay Area, Central Valley, Sacramento, and southern California. (Please see attached map for more detail.) As we understand it, the study region is bounded by the following: Pacheco Pass to the south, the Altamont Pass to the north, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Company corridor to the east, and the Caltrain corridor to the west. The two preferred alternatives are San Jose to Central Valley via Pacheco Pass, and East Bay to Central Valley via Altamont Pass. The average cost per mile ranges from \$37.5 million for a Pacheco Pass alternative terminating at San Jose to \$74.3 million for a Pacheco Pass alignment serving San Francisco and Oakland with a new transbay tube.

Potential Impacts to San Benito County:

1. Proximity to San Felipe Lake (Soap Lake) and other properties

If the Pacheco Pass alternative is chosen, the route would lie approximately parallel to Highway 152, with San Felipe Lake lying between the proposed route and the County line. This area is considered to be entirely within the area's Flood Plain.

✓ Hydw

Furthermore, there may be potential impacts to the Pajaro River and other properties including some productive farms. Please provide a more detailed map of this area for further analysis.

#1 Agriculture

Potential Financial Impacts to San Benito County:

1. Transportation Funds Allocation

Although not a specific environmental impact, San Benito County would like to ensure that this project does not adversely impact its ability to obtain transportation funds in the future.

#5 Funds

Respectfully,

Don Marcus, Chair
San Benito County Board of Supervisors

cc: Board of Supervisors
Susan Thompson, CAO



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009

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GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

April 6, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Deputy Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite #1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: San Francisco to San Jose HST Project EIR/EIS

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the California High Speed Rail Project EIR/EIS from San Francisco to San Jose. Our comments relate to: (1) two focus areas outlined in the recently adopted San Mateo County Transit District Strategic Plan (*Multimodal Services and Transportation and Land Use*) and (2) construction management.

Multimodal Services

- The HSR project should be designed to maximize existing transit infrastructure investments and protect existing transit services to local communities. SamTrans services include fixed-route buses, paratransit and shuttle services.
- The EIR/EIS should adequately address the need for future feeder services to support local and regional access to future high speed rail and Caltrain.
- SamTrans recommends the project includes a comprehensive multimodal access strategy to maximize access to the High Speed Rail and Caltrain systems and maximize transit ridership. Auto access (parking) should be considered as only one of multiple access modes.

#1 intro

#3 coordination
with other
agencies

Transportation and Land Use

- The San Mateo County Transit District (District) is in partnership with local communities and developers with the vision of transforming the El Camino Corridor into a livable corridor with land uses and densities that encourage people to walk, bike and ride transit. This is referred to as the Grand Boulevard Initiative. The HSR project should be compatible and support this significant initiative.

#1 land use

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Page 2
April 6, 2009

- There are TOD projects envisioned along the existing Caltrain corridor. These projects, such as the transit village project at the Caltrain San Carlos station, should be addressed in the environmental document.
- It will be critical to retain a goal of preserving the character of the communities along the Caltrain corridor as project design is being advanced.
- It will be particularly important to work closely with SamTrans, JPB and the cities identified as HSR stops. Project design must be linked with land use decisions and a comprehensive access strategy.

#1 traffic & circulation
#1 Aesthetics
#3 coordination with other agencies

Construction Management

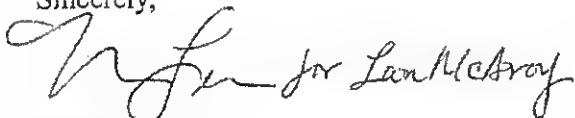
- It is critical to identify transportation services needed during HSR project construction. SamTrans is available to assist in developing mitigation measures related to additional or changed SamTrans services to support the construction of the HSR project.

#1 traffic & circulation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scoping of the HSR environmental document. We look forward to working with you on the delivery of this significant project.

#1 conclusion

Sincerely,



Ian McAvoy
Chief Development Office



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009

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APR 8 2009

MICHAEL J. SCANLON
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

April 6, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Deputy Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite #1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

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#1 land use

#3 construction
schedule

#3 multi-
modal
service

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#1
traffic
#1
land
use

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Page 2
April 6, 2009

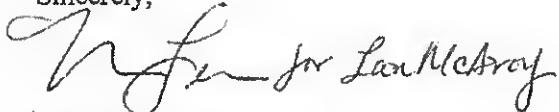
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Construction Management

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Sincerely,



Ian McAvoy
Chief Development Office

#3.6
TOD
#1 Community Impact
#3 Coordinate Stage
#1 Land use
#3 Construction Schedule



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009

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MICHAEL J. SCANLON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 6, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Deputy Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Scoping Comments- San Francisco to San Jose Project EIR/EIS

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the California High Speed Rail project. The San Mateo County Transportation Authority manages and administers the countywide Measure A $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax dedicated to multi-modal transportation improvements in San Mateo County. This sales tax has been in effect since 1989 and was renewed by voters in 2004.

Through these funds, San Mateo County Transportation Authority made significant investments in the Caltrain system that include station and grade separation projects within San Mateo County as well as contributing to system wide improvements. Nearly \$500 million in Measure A funds have been invested in Caltrain related improvements. In order to maximize return on investment, we urge you to coordinate closely with the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) to maximize past and current investments along the Caltrain corridor and minimize redesigning or rebuilding of capital improvement projects.

Some of the most significant Caltrain projects on the horizon in our Measure A Program include Caltrain Electrification, station upgrades and grade separations. As these projects are reaching critical decision-making milestones related to design and environmental clearance, design integration and close coordination are necessary to meet the needs of both the JPB and HSR with strong considerations for cost efficiencies.

We would like to take this opportunity to affirm our commitment to cooperate in the development of this very important and significant HSR program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "for Ian McAvoy".

Ian McAvoy
Chief Development Officer

#1 intro

#3
coordination
with other
agencies

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
1250 San Carlos Ave. – P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306 (650)508-6219

CO-4



RECEIVED
APR 8 2009
BY:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009

ROSANNE FOUST, CHAIR
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KARYL MATSUMOTO
JIM VREELAND

MICHAEL J. SCANLON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 6, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Deputy Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Scoping Comments- San Francisco to San Jose Project EIR/EIS

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "for Ian McAvoy".

Ian McAvoy
Chief Development Officer



SANTA CLARA
Valley Transportation Authority

RECEIVED
APR 6 2009
BY:

April 1, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Deputy Director
ATTN: San Francisco to San Jose HST Project EIR/EIS
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Scoping Comments on San Jose to San Francisco High Speed Rail EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

VTA welcomes the opportunity to provide input on the EIS/EIR scoping process for the San Jose Diridon Station to San Francisco portion of the High-Speed Rail (HSR) project. We will be submitting a second set of comments for the portion of the project south of San Jose Diridon Station to Merced when that process begins.

VTA has long supported the HSR project and advocated for the Pacheco Pass alignment, which was selected through the program level EIS/EIR. We are pleased that Proposition 1A was passed by California voters in November 2008, which allows work to begin on this next phase of the project. As a member of the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, we look forward to working collaboratively with your agency through the joint work effort recently defined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) negotiated with Samtrans staff. The specific comments we would like the EIS/EIR to address are in several different topical areas:

Scope of the EIS/EIR Effort

As part of the scoping effort currently underway for the HSR project, there is a need to establish project assumptions regarding how the HSR project relates to other efforts taking place in the Caltrain corridor. Further, it would be helpful to define project objectives for an interim period of operations when HSR service will exist in the Caltrain corridor but not be connected to a larger statewide network. Given the phased nature of the project, it may be necessary to define an "opening day" project and a "horizon year" project that have very different service profiles and thus different environmental impacts.

If Caltrain electrification and modernization improvements (delineated in the Caltrain 2015 Plan) are constructed as a part of the same project effort, is this all one engineering and environmental scope that covers all HSR and Caltrain improvements in the Peninsula Corridor or are there separate engineering and environmental efforts in the Corridor that will occur simultaneously?

How are the two separate projects (or individual project elements) phased? For example, Caltrain is close to completing a federal environmental document for Caltrain electrification that is being reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). How will this environmental work be integrated with the HSR process being reviewed at the federal level by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)? Is the modernized Caltrain assumed in the "No Build" condition or is it a component of a unified project? Will the impacts of increased ridership at the Diridon Station be attributed to a unified project or will they be distributed between the two project elements? How will the HSR project address the impacts of a storage yard if equipment is shared with Caltrain? Will a separate storage yard be needed?

#2 phasing
#2 ridership
#2 maintenance yard

Process to Select a Preferred Alternative

The EIS/EIR is analyzing two "major" alternatives, No-Build and HSR in the Corridor, but within the HSR Alternatives there are a host of decisions that will be made on Corridor operations, the profile throughout the Corridor and the level of mitigation in the Corridor. How will decisions on these issues be made? For example, will mitigations be strictly to satisfy environmental requirements, or will there be opportunities to provide enhancements or modifications beyond the environmental impacts? Several communities in Santa Clara County have expressed concern regarding the urban design impacts of the project, and a process engaging local communities and transportation agencies should be established to make these decisions before the formal process of submitting comments to a Draft EIS/EIR begins. An intermediary series of steps would go a long way to allaying community concerns on local design issues. VTA is prepared to offer our own resources and pre-existing citizen and policy advisory committee structure as a means of communicating with Santa Clara County as a whole.

#1 alternatives
#1 rail line
#1 process

VTA Facilities

VTA has facilities that are in proximity and may be impacted by the HSR project. These include:

1. Palo Alto Transit Center
2. Mountain View Transit Center
3. Mountain View Light Rail Tracks, Mountain View and Evelyn Stations
4. Santa Clara Transit Center
5. San Jose Diridon Transit Center
6. Vasona LRT Tunnel and San Jose Diridon LRT Station
7. Tamien Station, VTA-owned childcare facility, and VTA-owned developable land.

#6 property impacts
(over)

The EIS/EIR should address any impacts to these facilities.

Silicon Valley Rapid Transit Project (SVRT)

The SVRT Project has completed the 65% engineering phase for a BART extension through San Jose to Santa Clara. The HSR project and BART will be in close proximity in the area from San Jose Diridon Station to Santa Clara Station. The San Jose Diridon BART Station will be in a subway alignment. BART will continue above grade to a terminal station in Santa Clara where there will be a full-service end-of-the-line maintenance facility, a parking structure and a pedestrian overpass to the Caltrain Station. Station access and parking considerations, particularly at Diridon, will need to be considered in the EIR/EIS. We encourage HSR staff to become a participant in an upcoming effort led by the City of San Jose to develop a new Master Plan for the Diridon Station area. The engineering efforts for BART and HSR should be coordinated to minimize conflicts and maximize opportunities. Depending on timing, construction for both projects may occur in the same period requiring careful coordination.

#3
Corridor

Palo Alto Intermodal Center

VTA has been participating in planning efforts led by the City of Palo Alto to upgrade the Downtown Palo Alto station and vicinity to provide better access between the Downtown and Stanford University and the Station itself. The plan calls for a four track, grade separated concept and expanded bus transit center incorporating VTA and other service providers that utilize the station as a hub of operations. VTA is responsible for managing future federal earmark grants intended for the design and construction of this facility, which was also included in the 2000 Measure A sales tax program. As work progresses on this project it will be important to consider the changes that will be brought about by the HSR project.

Caltrain Projects Under Development

VTA, as a member of the Peninsula Corridor JPB, contributes to Caltrain capital projects. Currently, there are a number of projects in the final design phases that soon will be constructed at Santa Clara and San Jose Diridon Stations. As an early engineering effort, the HSR team should assess these projects, and the entire Caltrain capital plan to ensure projects will not be displaced within a short timeframe by HSR facilities.

#1
TRAFFIC

Local Road Network

As the countywide transportation planning agency, VTA has a role working with local cities and Caltrans in planning and funding the local road network. The HSR project will be totally grade separated from streets and roads that now cross the corridor at-grade. The EIS/EIR should address changes to traffic operations that may occur.

#1
Land
use

Urban Design Element

The HSR project will change the profile of large portions of the entire corridor and potentially increase the width of the Corridor in different locations. The EIS/EIR effort should include an urban design element that will look at options on how the "new" Corridor will fit into a largely developed urbanized area on the Peninsula.

Mr. Dan Leavitt
April 1, 2009
Page 4 of 4

A1
Const
Impact

Construction Impacts

The EIS/EIR in addition to looking at the physical impacts of construction should consider how transit will operate in the Corridor during construction. If Caltrain service is limited for a period of time, other operators may be called upon to provide bus bridge services and existing shuttle and transfer arrangements may be disrupted. The EIS/EIR will need to consider transit alternatives during the construction period.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with the Authority as the project proceeds.

Sincerely,



Michael T. Burns
General Manager

Kris Livingston

From: HSR Comments
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 3:12 PM
To: Kris Livingston
Subject: FW: San Francisco to San Jose HST
Attachments: SF to SJ NOP letter.pdf

From: Yvonne Arroyo [mailto:yarroyo@valleywater.org]
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2009 4:45 PM

To: HSR Comments
Subject: San Francisco to San Jose HST

Dear Mr. Leavitt,

Please find attached a copy of the Santa Clara Valley Water District's comments on the subject project. An original of the letter will follow in the mail. If you have any questions, please contact me at (408) 265-2607, extension 2319.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Arroyo

Associate Engineer

Community Projects Review Unit

Santa Clara Valley Water District

J#11
MTR

File: 30077
Various

April 6, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director
Attention: San Francisco to San Jose HST Project EIR/EIS
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: San Francisco to San Jose High-Speed Train

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The Santa Clara Valley Water District (District) has reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the subject project. The District has the following comments on the NOP for your consideration during the preparation of the EIR:

The District provides comprehensive water management for all beneficial uses and protection from flooding within Santa Clara County as described in the Santa Clara Valley Water District Act. In support of its mission, the District operates and maintains several water resource facilities in Santa Clara County, including flood protection facilities and water supply facilities which may be above ground or underground, several of which cross the Caltrain right of way which will be affected by the high-speed train project. The District's Water Resources Protection Ordinance requires that a District permit be obtained prior to any modification of or encroachment onto a District facility. The District may be a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act if the project requires permitting under the Water Resources Protection Ordinance, which appears to be a likely scenario, depending on the actual improvements or modifications to the Caltrain right of way needed to accommodate the high-speed train.

The EIR should identify and discuss the potential for any needed modifications to existing bridges or other crossings of existing creeks, culverts, or other flood protection facilities and include details of any proposed mitigation measures to address adverse impacts to those facilities.

The EIR should identify and discuss any potential to alter existing flood flows or flood patterns from construction of rail improvements or stations and provide mitigations accordingly. Additionally, if a large amount of impervious surface area will be introduced from new parking structures or other facilities related to operation or maintenance of the high-speed train, then the EIR should discuss mitigation for increased runoff which may exacerbate existing flooding conditions or increase the frequency of flooding.

Mr. Dan Leavitt
Page 2
April 6, 2009

The EIR should discuss any potential for the project to degrade water quality in adjacent surface waters directly or indirectly via storm drainage and any potential to adversely impact groundwater supplies or groundwater quality from any tunneling or other underground work.

The EIR should identify and discuss any potential to modify or disturb any of the District's water supply facilities which include several large diameter pipelines. The District supplies Santa Clara County with a majority of its wholesale water. As a result, careful consideration must be taken when designing the high-speed train facilities to ensure that the District's water supply facilities are not adversely impacted during construction or in the long term whereby our maintenance costs are increased or our maintenance access is compromised.

The NOP did not contain a detailed description of exactly how the project will be constructed in the Caltrain right of way; therefore, the District is unable to provide specific details on how the project may or may not impact our facilities. The EIR should contain sufficient detail of the project to determine the extent of potential impacts and area of influence of the project. The EIR should provide better clarity on whether the high-speed rail facilities will be above ground, below ground or utilize existing tracks at existing grade and define the limits where these modifications will occur such that the District can provide more detail on how the project may impact our facilities.

The District appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the NOP and looks forward to reviewing the EIR when it is available. Please notify the District at the earliest possible time as to the availability of the EIR. If you have questions, please contact me at (408) 265-2607, extension 2319.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Arroyo

Yvonne Arroyo
Associate Engineer
Community Projects Review Unit

cc: S. Tippets, M. Klemencic, K. Whitman, R. Yep, B. Ahmadi, C. Elias, L. Lee, J. Christie, A. Gurevich, S. Katric, Y. Arroyo, File

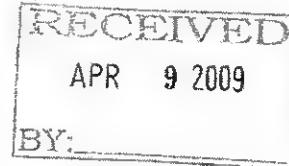
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5750 ALMADEN EXPWY
SAN JOSE, CA 95118-3686
TELEPHONE (408) 266-2600
FACSIMILE (408) 266-0271
www.valleywater.org
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

File: 30077
Various

April 6, 2009



Mr. Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director
Attention: San Francisco to San Jose HST Project EIR/EIS
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: San Francisco to San Jose High-Speed Train

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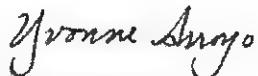
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Yvonne Arroyo
Associate Engineer
Community Projects Review Unit

cc: S. Tippets, M. Klemencic, K. Whitman, R. Yep, B. Ahmadi, C. Elias, L. Lee, J. Christie,
A. Gurevich, S. Katric, Y. Arroyo, File

30077_51769ya04-06

Kris Livingston

From: HSR Comments
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 3:11 PM
To: Kris Livingston
Subject: FW: San Francisco to San Jose HST

-----Original Message-----

From: Christina Watson [mailto:Christina@tamcmonterey.org]
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2009 4:48 PM
To: HSR Comments; Dan Leavitt
Cc: Don Bachman; Debbie Hale
Subject: San Francisco to San Jose HST

Dear Dan,

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County has been working with Caltrain, Union Pacific, the California Department of Transportation Division of Rail, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, and other stakeholders on a project to extend Caltrain commuter rail service to Monterey County.

The Caltrain Commuter Rail Extension to Monterey County project extends the existing San Francisco to San Jose to Gilroy Caltrain commuter rail service to Pajaro, Castroville and Salinas. It will begin with two weekday roundtrips, increasing to four round trips as demand warrants.

The project provides access to jobs, health care and interregional transportation, including the future High-Speed Rail train, offering an alternative to the highly congested US 101 corridor. This project includes intermodal facilities in three locations in Monterey County and a train layover facility in Salinas, which will serve to alleviate some of the congestion of trains that currently overnight in Gilroy.

This project is nearing completion of the Project Approval and Environmental Documents phase. You can find the planning and environmental documents for this project on our website, <http://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/rail/caltrain.html>.

We appreciate your efforts to keep us in the loop on developments for the High-Speed Rail train. Please continue to keep this project included in your improvement plans for the San Francisco to San Jose corridor.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Christina

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